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Pamphlet Box B5

A SERMON

Preached at Shubenacadie, February 11, 1877,

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AND

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF WELCOME LODGE, BRITISH TEMPLARS.

"Wine is a Mocker."—Proverbs XX., 1.

Thus saith scripture, and if that be true of wine, with manifold greater force will it apply to the brandy, whiskey, gin, and bad rum, the compounds of alum and aquafortis, of blue-stone and burnt sugar, of vinegar and vitriol, of soda, saltpetre, saleratus and strychnine, of bad hops, rosin and tar, which are sold and drunk all over the so-called civilized world at the present day.

Wine is a mocker. It deceives men with fair promises. Will you walk into my parlor says this spider to its flies, and when it gets them fairly within its power, it mocks their misery; "Hail, gentlemen, what think you now of yourselves; your money, your health, your character, your hopes, your happiness, gone."

Wine is a mocker. It promises manliness, and ends by stripping its victims of all that is manly and noble and true and good. A young man leaves home for distant town or city to make his own way in life. He is thrown into very different company from that in which he has been brought up. He is exposed to temptations of which he had never heard while under his father's roof; and among the wolves in sheep's clothing that meet him is strong drink. He is asked to take a glass. His father's warnings, his mother's prayers, his sister's parting tears, the Bible in the corner of his trunk, and his own conscience, cry,—No,—Look not upon the wine. But he is afraid to refuse. He will be called unmanly, tied to his mother's apron strings, or perhaps he will be titled, the deacon—False shame prevails. He yields and drinks. He has won his spurs among his fast companions, and made good his claim to manhood.

But not only in towns and villages and such places of concourse is it that the mocker is met. Through the country, though not so common as in former years,—the "ploughing frolic" or "rolling" is where many a boy takes his first step in a road that often ends in a drunkard's grave. A laddie who has never tasted anything stronger than tea or home-brewed hemlock, goes to said ploughing or rolling. The devil has been invited, and when the neighbors gather, Satan also comes with them in the person of one of his agents.

—rum. The boy goes out to the field to work. He begins to feel himself a man. He is no longer running errands and doing small jobs. All well, it is right that a boy should pride himself on his manliness if he make a good use of it. Soon the bottle comes, and one after another drinks as it passes along. To take his grog as if accustomed to it will win him a high place in such company. There is a short struggle but it is soon over. He tosses off his glass when it comes to him as if he were a practised hand, and passes it along with an air of indifference as if nothing had happened. Stop, young man, whether you be in village or field! Wine is a mocker. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and pass away. Many a one whose first glass was taken with the idea that it would give him a title to manliness is lying in the gutter to-night, all that ever was manly and true, yea, almost all trace of humanity gone, and from a similar beginning, thousands of bloated forms, water-logged with rum, unable to float longer, have sunk into an untimely grave.

Boys, young men, beware the mocker. It promises manliness, but if yielded to, it may sink you to the level of the brute, yea, far below it, for in drunkenness there is not even the common sense and intelligence of the beast, there is madness. The brute has meaning in all that it utters. If hungry it calls for food. If suffering it cries with pain. It will call in tones of love or anger to others of its kind, but man, when rum has mounted the throne of reason, does none of these. His silly, senseless mutterings are as far below the brute as the brute is below humanity. We pity poor Nebuchadnezzar, deprived of reason and driven forth to pasture for seven years among the beasts of the field until his hair had grown like eagles feathers and his nails like birds claws, but at his worst he was not so far removed from all that distinguishes man from the lower animals as were human forms that I have seen lying on the sidewalk or in the gutter.

This mocker is not limited to one method of working. There is a large class found chiefly among the millions of hard workers at manual or mental toil, who are under no temptation to drink that they may stand high in the esteem of their fellows, and to these, wine adapts itself in a different way. It mocks them by promising strength, but like the Philistine traitress, when trusted it robs them of their might and leaves them helpless. A man feels weak and weary. How a glass of liquor would enliven and strengthen him. He takes it and feels his spirits rise. The grasshopper was a burden before, now he has the strength of a giant. Surely wine has fulfilled its promise. Wait a little. The excitement passes and he sinks lower than ever. If he again resort to the cup to raise his spirits, it is only to fall yet lower, and if the practice be continued, the liquor soon loses its power to elevate, and he goes down to a premature grave. When the body is weary it needs rest. Stimulants do not strengthen it, as a general rule they merely draw upon the natural strength in advance.

A man has left to him a property which will give him five hundred dollars a year, say from the time he is of age till three score and ten. He spends rather freely at first, and at the end of nine months, the five hundred has almost all disappeared. There are two courses open to him. He may spend very little for the remaining three months, let his purse rest, until he receive the money for the following year, or he may draw it in advance. He chooses the latter plan, his pocket is once more full, and he can spend as fast as ever; but getting his money thus, he has to pay a heavy discount upon it. He cannot expect the full amount. Running at this rate we soon find him drawing his money far in advance. The income of the twentieth year is drawn six or eight years before it comes due, and deducting the interest for so long a time, he does not receive more than two hundred dollars ready money. That sum will

keep him but a few months, and in middle life his legacy is exhausted, and he is left penniless.

Another in similar circumstances spends his money very carefully. He uses but four hundred dollars the first year, and invests the remainder. He continues this practice through life, and when the last of the bequest is drawn, he has to his credit the principal and accumulated interest of his investments for fifty years, and is a wealthy man.

Such cases represent to a certain extent our use or abuse of life. One starts out with a certain amount of vitality. If he be very careful, commit no excess, be temperate in all things, in eating, drinking, sleeping, working, he may live to see many days, the vitality which he saved in youth with its accumulated interest, carrying him lightly through and giving him a green old age. Another runs into excess. There is over indulgence or over exertion with its consequent weariness and depression. To recruit his energies he takes strong drink, and his brain or body is nerved to its wonted vigor. But what has he done? He has drawn upon his strength before it came due, he has to pay a heavy interest for getting it in advance, the supply is soon exhausted, and he is left a wreck.

There is no phase of the mockery that seems so cruel as the one we have just mentioned. If one were imprisoned for a year with an allowance of food barely sufficient for each day's wants, enough to support life but not enough for comfort; and a visitor were to come in the guise of friendship offering a little extra food each day to satisfy the cravings of nature what a kindness it would seem. Months pass by, and the prisoner is one day told that the supply is exhausted. His seeming friend was but giving him what had been stored up for his future use, and now before the year is gone, the food is done, and he must starve. Such is the mockery of wine. Man is weary. Work is pressing. Strong drink comes offering new strength for it; and many a one when life is fast ebbing, opens his eyes too late to the sad fact that he has been cruelly deceived.

There is yet another sphere in which the mocker numbers its victims by myriads. Old and young are in search of happiness. Wine comes in, suits itself to this thirst, and promises pleasure. It moveth itself aright, it giveth its color in the cup; in its sparkle there is laughter and glee, but as to the fulfilment of its promise, I need not do more than remind you that at the last it "biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder."

We sometimes hear Scripture adduced in support of strong drink. Christ made wine that a marriage feast might be merry, therefore it is right to have liquor to give zest and hilarity to social gatherings.—Paul advised Timothy to take wine for his dyspepsy, therefore we have apostolic authority for a morning dram as an appetizer to coax the breakfast down, another to keep it down, for several glasses to make peace between the discordant elements of a heavy dinner inconveniently huddled together in a crowded stomach, and, lest any of the devotions to Bacchus should have been missed during the day, for appeasing the anger of the little grape god by a plenteous evening sacrifice in the form of a night-cap of strong toddy before going to bed. These scripture examples are quoted to show that the use of strong drink is not sinful.

In reply I would say, first, that the cases above mentioned have no reference to the poisonous chemical mixtures which go to make up the strong drinks of our land, but to the fermented juice of the grape, the simple wines of Bible lands, which are about as intoxicating as our light home made wines, the fermented juices of the raspberry or currant.

And further, I freely admit that the use of even the strongest and worst liquors is not sinful. There is nothing under the

sun of which the *use* is sinful. The *use* of poison is not sinful, but if I make it the means of injury to myself or my neighbor, I am guilty. In like manner the *use* of strong drink is not sinful, but when it makes men break the third commandment and blaspheme their Maker, when it leads to the violation of the Sabbath, when by means of it the young dishonor their parents, and bring to them grey hairs and wrinkled faces, when it nerves men to take the lives of their fellow men, or tempts them to yield themselves up to lust, adultery, and theft, then its use, or rather *abuse*, is certainly sinful.

We need never be at a loss in deciding as the sinfulness or innocence of a thing. Our Saviour has given an infallible test. Let us try strong drink by it. "A *good* tree *cannot* bring forth *evil fruit*, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. *By their fruits ye shall know them.*" Draw nigh and look upon the fruit, though I earnestly hope none of us will ever have to taste of it. It is not pleasant to the eye, nor a tree to be desired to make one wise. Look at that shrivelled fruit on the lowest branch, one of the least important and within easy reach. That is poverty. At first only a few cents for a glass, then larger sums to stand treat, then neglected business, broken fences, weedy farms, and tumble down buildings, then mortgaged lands and homes, and soon all is swept away, and—

"Want like an armed man shall rush
The hoary head of age to crush."

For—"He that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich." "The drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty."

Look further. See that drooping branch, and those discolored, scabby fruits which hang from it in thick heavy clusters. That branch is laden with disease and all its accompaniments. Who hath woe, who hath sorrow, who hath contentions, who hath wounds without cause; who hath the bloated form and the nerveless arm, the unsteady step, and the thick idiotic utterance; who sow the seeds of disease in their own persons and transmit them to posterity? They that tarry long at the wine.

Look yet again. See that branch partly hidden among the foliage—in its very appearance there is bitterness. That fruit is crime. What fills our land with workhouses, jails, and asylums; what fills the police courts with criminals, the penitentiaries with robbers and murderers, and feeds the gallows tree? It is liquor. Nearly all the poverty and crime, and much of the disease that curses the English speaking nations of the world is due directly or indirectly to strong drink.

But the end is not yet. Well would it be if the fruit bearing of this deadly upas were confined to time; if when earth and all that is therein shall be burned up, it were to share the general fate, but this cannot be. Like the tree of life its fruit is immortal and it yields its fruit every month. Yea, every moment throughout an endless duration it will be bringing forth lamentation and mourning and woe; for I believe there is no one vice which at the present day is dragging so many souls down to ruin as drunkenness. I look upon strong drink as one of Satan's most effective emigration agents for peopling his dreary dominions, for this book, which is so faithful in telling of the evils which drinking brings upon men in this life, points to that eternity which lies just before us, and in words of sad and solemn warning, it shews the drunkard's doom. It bids us be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor thieves, nor *drunkards* shall inherit the Kingdom of God; and again, "The works of the flesh are these," and then follows a long black catalogue closed up by *drunkenness*, of which says the apostle, "I tell you, as I told you before, that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God." To the black rum bottle as it goes forth on its murderous mission, we may well apply the

words of the seer in Revelation, concerning the pale horse:—"I saw a black horse, and he that sat upon him was *death*, and *hell followeth* with him."

To all who appeal to Scriptures in support of strong drink, I would recommend the Savior's test—"By their fruits ye shall know them." We have mentioned some of the fruits of strong drink. What think ye of the tree?

Wine is a mocker It makes fair promises, but it fills the world with want and weeping, and the world to come with wailing and woe.

I have no doubt that the thoughts of our hearts if put into language would run thus:—"Thank God, I am not a drunkard." I hope not, but remember it is not necessary to lie in the gutter to belong to that class. Many a man in whom the effects of liquor are never seen, who is never unfitted for business or work, is a slave to strong drink, and can no more give up his glass, than a toper his cups, and many a drunkard's grave is filled by those who in life passed for sober men.

Let me mention some symptoms of the disease, given fifty years ago by Lyman Beecher:—

1. First, associations of time and place—There are some who can continue at their daily employments for weeks or months without any desire for strong drink, but if a public day comes round, and they are out, the appetite arises and they generally go home, or are taken home, intoxicated. With others, the sight of a tavern by the wayside or at the journey's end, awakens thirst, and they must drink. Still another class may pass by taverns or join in public gatherings unaffected, but on meeting with particular persons, the instinctive thought is, 'something to drink.' In all cases where associations of time and place thus awaken desire, a man is, to a certain extent, under the influence of the tyrant appetite, and is standing on dangerous ground.

2. Second symptom—A disposition to multiply occasions for drinking; to make all conditions of weather, all states of health, all kinds of undertaking, an excuse for resorting to the cupboard or the counter.

3. Third, and still more advanced—The desire for strong drink returning daily at stated times. This is a dangerous place; these who stand on it have good cause for alarm.

4. The desire for concealment—When one thinks that if friends saw him they might think he was indulging too frequently, and he seeks opportunities for drinking when no eye is upon him.

5. When one always drinks as much as he can stand in company—He is sure to overstep the mark, and lose some of his self-respect; then he will drink at every opportunity caring little for appearances, and will probably soon be a confirmed drunkard.

6. When one is always irritated at efforts that are made to suppress intemperance—Those who are moved by some instinctive impulse to make opposition to such efforts, ought to examine instantly whether love of liquor be not the cause of it, for temperance men seldom, if ever, oppose the reformation of intemperance.

If in us is found any one or more of the above marks, we are not free; we are not safe; and, instead of 'Lord I thank Thee,' our prayer should be 'Lord save or we perish.'

We have seen the woes of the poor drunkard's life, we have followed him to the drunkard's grave, and as the clods fell with a dull, heavy thud upon his coffin, we have had rung in our ears the drunkard's awful doom. The grave is closed, the mourners and friends disperse, but as we are returning from the funeral it may be we pass by the place where, in days gone by, we have often seen him hastening in or staggering out—the place where he bought his rum—and thoughts like the following began to arise:—If it had not been for that place, instead of dishonoring

the pure dust of the earth by his impure ashes, his spirit weeping the tears of the lost, he might have been to-day a useful and respected member of society. If nobody would sell liquor, nobody would buy it. If rumsellers would quit selling, rum-drinkers would quit drinking. Policemen would have to lay down their batons and go to work, jails and penitentiaries would be turned into schools and churches, the grass would grow strong and high over one broad road which leads down to death, and the millennium would no longer have to travel afoot and beg its way, but, taking the wings of the morning it would soon be in our midst. Who is to blame for his death and ruin? It is not ours to blame the poor victim. He was helplessly bound in the chains of a merciless appetite. If strong drink could be had he would have it. In his own strength he was powerless to resist. God judges him. He meets an awful doom. But by us he is to be pitied rather than condemned, and again the question comes: *Who* is to be blamed? Where are we to lay the guilt? Some of it at the rumseller's door. He is one of the principal agents in bringing about the drunkard's ruin, and if through my doings my brother perish, justice requires his blood at my hand.

Hear one of the laws which God gave to Israel:—"If a man shall open a pit, or if a man shall dig a pit and not cover it, and an ox or an ass fall therein, the owner of the pit shall make it good."—Ex. xxi 33. How much then is a man better than an ox or an ass! And the principle of Eternal Justice, which gave such a law to Israel, will apply to the case of the rumseller. If a man shall open a pit and a man shall fall into it, the owner of the pit shall answer for it. The sentence of Heaven against the rumseller is: "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground; of thy hand will I require it."

But I do not come before you to-night to preach against rumsellers. If I had a congregation of them it would be my duty, however unpleasant it might be to them, to set before them as plainly and faithfully as I could the evil of such a course, and try to led them into a better way, but it will do little good to preach to you against other men's sins behind their backs. And even if I had them here I would not. I could not, lay all the blame upon them. God Himself judges them as he does the drunkard; but by man the seller, like the drinker, is to be pitied rather than blamed. The one is bound by chains of appetite; he loves drink more than he does his own temporal and eternal welfare. The other is bound by chains of avarice; he cares for money more than for humanity, more than he cares for his Maker. That may seem a harsh statement, but any one can see its truth. It is simply a question of might—pull conscience, pull coffer, the strongest wins the day. If a man cared for the souls of men, for the welfare of the race, and for God, more than for gold, he would certainly quit selling liquor; but Satan holds him captive by his love of money, makes him thus do service and help his cause. The drinker is selling his soul, ruining himself to gratify an overmastering appetite; the vender is selling *his* soul, that he may satisfy another appetite just as tyrannical; and therefore, I say that the seller, though guilty before God of the blood of souls ruined by his strong drink, is by *us* to be pitied rather than blamed.

We pause at his door no longer, but pass along to consider our own sins and duties with regard to the mocker of the text. In this connection I wish to say something about the excuses which many good people, which, it may be, not a few of you are in the habit of making for some of those who sell.

Men and women will cry out:—You are too hard; that is unfair, unjust; they are not greedy of gain, all they want is to make an honest living; see how charitable many of them are, look at the large

sums they give to benevolent objects, and for religious purposes, how well they support the church; and see how kind those are who sell on a smaller scale, how much they give away in charity; all these things shew that it is not greed of gain. They are keeping, it may be a grocery or hotel, and the truth is their business will not pay, they cannot make a living at it without the bar; it is too bad to try and stop them and thus cut off their means of support. Such an excuse is very common in this part of the country. I have often heard it. And concerning it I have two things to say:—

First.—It is seldom true. I never yet knew an instance of one who had been successfully running a grocery or hotel and a bar or bottle shelf in connection with it, and gave up the liquor because it was wrong, who afterwards had to give up the business because it would not pay, and he could not make a living. I do not say that there have not been such cases, but for every one, you will find ten in these circumstances whose business does pay without the aid of strong drink. Necessity does not compel men to sell, it is love of money. Men make more money by it, and cloak it over with the plea of necessity.

A second remark which I have to make about that excuse is, that even if it were true, if a grocery or hotel would not pay without the bar, that is no reason why I should continue to sell. No matter what my age, color, nationality, or circumstances in life; whether I am young, middle aged, or old, married or single, widow or widower, British, Canadian, or Foreign, I have no right to rob my neighbor's wife and child of food and clothing, that I may be warmed and filled.

If a thief or pick-pocket forsake his craft, he will have to give up what is now his means of support; if a highway robber or night burglar renounce his occupation because it is bad, he will be throwing away what is his present livelihood and will have to betake himself to some other calling for his daily bread, but that is no reason why they should continue their plundering and theft. In like manner, if the rumseller abandon his trade he will be giving up what is his present means of support, but that is no reason why he should continue a pursuit which is in direct violation of the law of the land, and contrary to the law of God. And, if closing the bar of a grocery or hotel makes the business so unprofitable that the owner is obliged to give it up and turn to some other business for a living, that does not justify him in continuing his liquor selling. I have no right under any circumstances to injure my neighbor that my oil cruise and meal barrel may overflow. If I cannot make a living out of my shop or hotel without a bar, there are other means by which I can. There are ways of making an honest livelihood open to all in Nova Scotia who choose to work. I have no right to live by robbing my neighbor or stealing his property,—just as little right have I to live by selling him strong drink, injuring him, often ruining him, body and soul, for time and for eternity.

I may be asked here, "How do you reconcile your statement, that 'avarice continues the trade' with the well-known fact that some of the dealers are generous to God's cause, and kind to the poor?" Such charity seems to me like bribing Heaven, paying license fees to the Most High.

Men go to the Court of Sessions—their request is in substance, as follows:—'Give me liberty to sell liquors, license me to make men swear and fight, and break the laws and their fellowmen's heads, allow me to help fill the jails, and I will pay a trifle into your funds for the administration of justice, and keeping up houses of correction.' The reply of Government may thus be translated:—'All well; pay fifty to one hundred dollars and we will give you 'License,' that is, liberty for the next year to make wise men fools, civil men quarrelsome, honest men

rogues, kind men cruel, in short, to turn men into demons, to fill poor houses, work houses, jails, and asylums as fast as you are able, so that those institutions may not have to be closed for want of inmates. We know that though we may make your business lawful, we cannot make it just. We know that the lawlessness occasioned by rumselling costs far more than the amount of the license fees, we will have more policemen and other law officers to pay, but then to make up the remainder, we can tax these steady, well to do, farmers and merchants who are so comfortable. *You* tax the drinkers, keep *them* poor by making them pay heavily into your coffers. A little of what you take from them you will give to us to help keep them in order, to punish them when necessary, and feed them occasionally when we have them in the lock-up, and *we* will tax the *sober* part of the people for the remainder; and thus working into each others hands, we will keep things from stagnation.'

And when men with their eyes open to the harm they are doing, yet caring more for the money than for the mischief, sell liquor, and at the same time give largely to charity, it seems to be the same principle at work. There may be some, but they are very few, engaged in the traffic, who do not realize the injury they are doing, who are kind and charitable at heart, and for such let us pray that their eyes may be opened; but with the great majority of them it looks as if it were conscience money, a bone thrown to an uneasy monitor within, to keep it quiet while they go on with their work.

Such a course speaks for itself, and I will try to translate its language into plain English:—"Our Father which art in heaven, I would like to please Thee and yet I want to sell liquor. I can make more money at it than at any other business. This will I do:—Allow me to sell, to make bloated bodies and shrivelled pockets, allow me to break up family ties, to blight and blast social life, and send souls down to destruction; and I will give largely to objects of charity. Allow me to reduce fifty families to poverty, and I will help to keep three or four poor families who may be living near me. Grant me liberty to make a thousand dollars a year by ruining your cause, and I will give a hundred towards keeping it up. Permit me to ruin a hundred souls at home, and I will gladly contribute what may be the means of saving two or three in the heathen world; and all I ask is for money's sake. Amen."

That is a hard way of looking at the matter, but I appeal to your common sense if it is not a true way. A man will take a thousand dollars from his fellow men by ruining their bodies, their families, and their souls, and will give a hundred to help feed the hungry and clothe the naked, congratulating himself all the while on his generosity, and thinking that although God may not wholly approve of his work, He will be pleased with the offering. The idea is so absurd that one can scarce speak of it with patience, yet how often one hears the excuse made for some favorite rumseller; O, but they do a great deal of good with their money, they give liberally towards the support of the church and the advancement of God's cause. Yes, they do a little good, and a thousand times as much harm. They give a little to God and charity, and take twenty times as much, in making objects of charity; and after all that may be said, it still remains that the love of money, which is the root of all evil, keeps open our bars; with all the so-called charity, it is avarice that rules the day; and the excuses which many well meaning persons make, echoing the rumseller's own plea, are but poor attempts at cloaking sin, and making Satan appear as an angel of light.

I wish to speak now more particularly to professing christians as to their sins and duties with regard to the mocker and its victims. True, the duty of caring for the welfare of their brother rests upon the

men of the world as well as upon the church, but they have never promised to perform their duties. They are refusing obedience to Christ. They are still in the ranks of his enemies. They are yet in the world in that company where His opposers are; and are by their own profession saying, "we will not have this man to reign over us." If they choose to help in this great and good cause, well, but I would remind them that temperance is not religion, that being a teetotaller does not make a man a christian, that many an active temperance worker is on the broad road; that there are abstainers who are infidels and scoffers, delighting to set themselves in opposition to Christ, and Christ's people, and Christ's cause, who advocate temperance as many men do honesty, not from principle but from policy, who quarantine rum as they would robbery, because injurious to life and property; I would remind them that out of Christ they have a dark and awful future before them, and if finally lost it will avail them nothing that they reached that end by a sober road. We can only hope and pray that those of them who lend their aid to put a stop to rumselling, will not allow their own day of grace to pass unimproved, and at last go down to eternal death after helping others to escape. We are thankful for their help, but upon the professing christian church rests the responsibility. Its members have enlisted as soldiers of Christ to help Him win the world, and one service that calls loudly for help to-day, is that of putting a stop to the traffic in strong drink which is doing so much to build up Satan's kingdom and injure the Master's cause.

Allow me in the first place to say a word or two to church members, if there be any such here, who directly encourage the traffic by petitioning the Court of Sessions to license the sale of liquor in your midst. Come now my brother let us reason together of such conduct in its true light.

A man professes to be a follower of Christ, to have at heart the interests of the Saviour, and the welfare of humanity for whom that Saviour died. He rises in the morning, and prays God to bless the poor and the needy, an hour or two later he signs a petition to the Court of Sessions to license a manufactory whose special work it is to make men poor and needy. He prays God to bless the widow and the fatherless; he prays government to allow the sale of that which is making weeping widows and fatherless children all the world over. In the morning he prays God to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, after breakfast he prays the magistrate that a certain place in the neighbourhood may be licensed to sell that which does more than any other one thing on earth, to strip and starve the weeping wife and mother and the shivering little ones. He prays God to bless His own cause, he petitions the justices to bless the devil's cause. He prays God to save souls, prays men to destroy them. When face to face with God, it is "Thy kingdom come," when facing some one who is carrying around a petition to get signatures for license, then it is—"Let Satan's kingdom come." On bended knees he prays with the lip, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, he rises and prays with the pen that Satan's will may be done on earth as it is in hell. He prays God that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed; prays government that it may be built up. He prays God that the kingdom of glory may be hastened, and prays the Court of Sessions that it may be kept off as long as possible. I ask you brother can you imagine a greater mockery of the Most High. I trust that you will look upon the matter in its true light—and act accordingly. And when the next petition for license is sent around, I do hope and pray that for their own sake, for the church's sake, for the honor of christianity, for the honor of Christ, there will be no

names found on it that are on the communion roll either of your congregation or of mine.

And now brethren, suffer a word of exhortation to another class, consisting I suppose of nearly all the professing christians who are here to-night. I mean those who do not like the traffic, who see its evils and are sorry for them, who in no way encourage it but simply sit still and do nothing.

When government refuses to grant license, saying to petitioners,—No, gentlemen, we will not curse your settlement by allowing the sale of rum in it, then it is that with the followers of Christ in that place rests the responsibility of seeing that the law is obeyed, and that the danger to which weak and tempted ones may be exposed, is averted. When I see any one in violation of the laws of God and man dealing out mischief and misery in the community, it is a duty I owe to society and more especially to my weak brother who is liable to become a victim, to give notice to the rulers, God's ministers, appointed to execute justice for the protection and well-being of society, that such evil exists, and ask them to check the wrong. If I wilfully neglect to do so, I am an accomplice in the guilt.

Pilate could have prevented the execution of Christ. He had the power, but he quietly yielded to the clamour of the Jews, and allowed them to go on with that darkest deed that ever stained our earth. He then took water and washed his hands, attempting to clear himself, '*I* am innocent of the blood of this just person, see *ye* to it.' Was Pilate innocent? Nay, verily, he was more guilty than the Jews, for they had not the power to save or destroy except as Pilate gave them liberty. His word could have saved Christ; that word gave the sentence of death.

So is it now. If Christ's followers see the rum traffic injuring their Master's cause and crucifying Him afresh, and if they, having the power by the word of their mouth to stop the injury, stand by yielding to the clamor of the liquorites, and saying, I am innocent of the blood of these victims, see ye to it; Does that clear them? By no means. Their voice could stop the traffic; that voice is withheld, their silence permits it to go on. By their act they consent to the deed of those who are doing the wrong, and are sharers with them in the guilt.

Take a trip, in fancy, to some savage land—for I would not like to suppose such a case in Nova Scotia. See yonder native digging a pit by a travelled path. He covers the dangerous hole with flowers, and takes his place beneath. A traveller tumbles in, gets scratched and bruised, and has to pay to get out. Another comes along and shares a similar fate. Still they come. All who fall in get out more or less injured, both in purse and person. Some of them have hurts from which they will never recover. The natives living near know all about it. Every day the sad scene is repeated, and yet they look coolly on. Listen to them talking about it; thus they speak:—"Look, there goes another, see how he tumbles; how he limps and staggers as he comes out; what a pity that hole is there. Ha, ha, there's another'—and, with such like interjections, they turn away. Who is to blame? Where lies the guilt? They might easily stop the pit and save their fellow men, but because they are willing to allow it, it is kept open to do its work of death.

Rum shops are such pits digged by the highway side of life. All who fall in come out more or less injured in constitution, character, and conscience, and have to pay well for the bruise. To many a one they are bottomless pits, one end opening to earth, the other opening to hell, for men go in sober, come out at the other end drunkards, and, like the beast in Revelation, they only pass out of the bottomless pit to go into perdition, for 'no drunkard shall inherit the Kingdom of God.'

There is such a pit in your midst. It is

doing mischief in the community for miles around, fitting the young for a drunkard's life, the old for a drunkard's death. It may be, probably will be, a bottomless pit to some, and will have lost souls to shew at the last great day as a result of its work.

Your word can stop that pit. You may let those bodies suffer and those souls go to ruin, or you may prevent it. If this be so, and you stand by, not moving hand or foot or tongue towards stopping the evil, saying by your act "though I can, I will not; though I have the power to save, I will not use that power;" I put it to yourselves, where lies the guilt? To your door must God come when He maketh inquisition for the victims' blood.

Professing christian men and women, for the sake of the young men in your own congregation and mine, for the sake of your children who are so near the pit and may yet fall into it, if it be allowed to remain, for the sake of poor souls, who otherwise may be for ever shut out from the Kingdom of Heaven, for Christ's sake, whose cause is being injured, I appeal to you to take up the responsibility that lies at your door; and rising as one man, say, 'Let the bar be closed, the mocker be banished,' and it shall be done. Then, and not till then, can you wash your hands in innocency. Many a heart will give you thanks, and God, even your own God, will bless you. *Amen.*